ASK LUCY: actress and most celebrated comedian of the twentieth century; offers advice to working mothers and aspiring actors and actresses

**Women seek advice on balancing motherhood and career**

September, 23, 1954

**Dear Lucy:** I am so confused! I have a great job working as a secretary for the Beneficial Finance Company. I love my boss and am truly happy to go to work each day. I have been married for 12 years now and have only recently become pregnant. Although we are thrilled, it creates a huge struggle for me. My husband and mother-in-law are pressuring me to stay at home once the baby is born. This would be heartbreaking for me because I feel that a part of my life would be ending. Would I really be hurting my baby if I decided to go back to work? How can I get my husband and relatives to realize that my work is equally important to me and makes me happy?

Lucille Ball

*--Confused and Pregnant*

**Dear Confused and Pregnant:** It is a great thing in life to wait all those years and then finally be told that you are pregnant! For me, it was even more special because I had 3 miscarriages before my daughter was born.[[1]](#footnote-1) Look, the best advice I can give you is to put your feelings and your happiness before anyone or anything else. If you love who you are and what you do, then everything that is meant to happen will fall into place. If working at your job makes you happy, then I suggest you continue after the baby is born. Your happiness will greatly contribute in making you a much better mother when you are home. Although I was almost 40 when little Lucy was born1, and I desperately wanted to be a mother, I loved the set and performing before the live audiences. It was just too much a part of me to give up. My advice is to stay strong. Tell your husband and mother-in-law that you want to live with no regrets and that your job is just too important for you to give up. In time, they’ll get used to it.

*--Lucy*

**Dear Lucy:** I’m heartbroken! Yesterday I received a letter in the mail that I have been accepted into the Yale Drama School. It’s like my dream come true. The problem is that my parents will not give their permission for me to go. I’m a 17-year-old girl and have my whole life ahead of me. They want me to stay in my hometown, marry my high school sweetheart, and have babies. I want a career in show business, and this is once in a lifetime chance. How can I get my parents to believe in me and see that it is acceptable for me to differ from these domestic expectations?

*--Yale Bound*

**Dear Yale Bound:**Honey, you have one life to live! Have no regrets! I don’t believe in luck. I believe in hard work. Obviously, if you have the talent to be accepted into Yale Drama School, you will make an exceptional actress someday. I suggest that you tell your parents that all great actresses need to start somewhere, and this is your chance. I would see if you can get your parents to agree to allow you to try it for a couple of months. Maybe this won’t seem so drastic to them and will give them time to adjust to the idea of you being in school. I’ll look for your name in the lights in a few years!

*--Lucy*

1. Andrews, Bart, and Bart Andrews. *The "I Love Lucy" Book*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1985. Print. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)